



## **NORTHAMPTON MASSACHUSETTS** **RANKED CHOICE VOTING COMMITTEE**

**Meeting Date: Nov. 17, 2021**

**Meeting Time: 4:00 pm**

1. **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm. Present at the meeting were members Chair Boulrice, Councilor Dwight, John Crowley and Mark Ventola and Catherine Kay. Also present was Attorney Alan Seewald.

The meeting was held via teleconference and was audio and video recorded. All votes of the committee were done by roll call vote.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None
3. **Approve Minutes of the Oct. 27, 2021 Meeting:** Councilor Dwight moved to approve the minutes; Member Crowley seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote of 5 Yes, (Ventola, Boulrice, Kay, Dwight and Crowley), 0 No.
4. **Is the Committee ready to begin discussions about Northampton legislation for RCV? Or is more research still needed?**

The committee is asked to make a recommendation concerning the RCV process—choosing the best algorithm that will most closely demonstrate the will of the voters. What the committee has done to date:

- The committee reviewed the five most widely used algorithms utilized by RCV communities. These methods were described in the Amherst RCV report. The committee has learned from Voter Choice Massachusetts that the Instant Run-Off Voting and the Weighted Inclusive Gregory Methods are the mostly widely used methods by other communities.
- Voter Choice Massachusetts provided draft legislation that they feel will likely pass through the state legislature. This draft was accompanied by a list of questions that VCM feels needs to be addressed by the committee. The answers to those questions will help shape the final recommendations (and legislation).
- A 50-ballot mock election was done with the help of Jeff Sylvestro of LHS Associates. Mr. Sylvestro demonstrated the Dominion product which is capable of employing three methods of RCV: Instant Run Off, Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method, and Points Instant Run Off. If the committee chooses a different method, the process will likely require a capital purchase of scanning equipment in conjunction with different tabulation software.

A key factor that the committee would like to understand is *do results change given any of the alternative ranking methods, and if so, how do they change?* At this point the committee is interested in understanding the difference when IRV vs. STV methods are employed. Going through the RCV Profile Settings, the committee selected the following:

- Scenario 1 – RCV Method: STV; Previous Round Evaluation: Backwards from previous round; Elimination Type: Single; Votes to Include in Threshold Calculation: Continuing Ballots 1<sup>st</sup> Round.
- Scenario 2 – RCV Method: IRV; All other settings same as above

5. **Is it too early to start public education?** While the city will need to provide extensive education regarding ranked Choice Voting, Attorney Seewald counseled that it is not the committee's charge to do any public education at this time. That responsibility will fall to a future City Council and Mayor.
6. **NEW BUSINESS:** None

7. **FUTURE MEETING DATE(S):** The next meeting will be held December 15 at 4:30 pm. It will be a teleconference meeting.
8. **ADJOURN:** At 5:17 pm Councilor Dwight moved to adjourn the meeting; Member Kay seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote of 5 Yes (Dwight, Kay, Ventola, Crowley, Boulrice) and 0 No.

For Questions, please contact City Clerk Pamela L. Powers @ (413) 587-1223